

**California  
Federation of  
Teachers**

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**POLICIES  
AND  
POSITIONS**

American  
Federation of Teachers  
AFL-CIO



## **Objectives of the California Federation of Teachers**

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**The aims of this organization shall be to organize the educational and health care employees of California into locals chartered by the American Federation of Teachers, and bring them into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation; to obtain for them all the rights and benefits to which they are entitled; to raise the standards of their professions and to secure the conditions essential to the best professional service; and to promote such democratization of the educational institutions as will enable them better to equip their students to take their places in the economic, social and political life of the community; to strive for equal educational opportunities for all; and to support state legislation to benefit the students and educational and health care employees of the State of California.**



# California Federation of Teachers Policies and Positions

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## INTRODUCTION

In his essay "Campaign for California Education" presented at the 1992 California Federation of Teachers Convention, CFT Past-President Raoul Teilhet set forth the social, economic and cultural commitments underlying CFT's positions. The Federation has demonstrated its adherence to this set of ideals in stands it has taken on legislation and initiatives, in its endorsements of candidates at all levels, and in its distribution of Committee on Political Education funds. In its publications and allocation of resources, the CFT has made clear its commitment to

- the adoption of a progressive system of taxation to achieve adequate funding of education and other social programs;
- an end to violence, racism, sexism and other forms of intolerance;
- a guarantee of a minimum level of health care, food and housing to every member of society;
- an increase of civic involvement by all members of the society;
- an improvement of the democratic processes of government;
- a governmental policy for full employment;
- the provision of universal child care;
- an increase in education regarding healthy living requirements;
- a reform in labor law in order to equalize the balance of power between labor and management;
- the adoption of legislation which increases the protection of the environment;
- the democracy, freedom and social responsibility in the United States and the rest of the world.

CFT has always made clear that it sees education as a major component of the solution to these problems, and that it sees these problems as school-and education-related issues. "The systems by which we are governed, and which we make public policy, and by which we represent ourselves as workers are all school-related issues," says "Campaign for

California Education.” We agree with James Comer’s<sup>1</sup> statement that “All the money and effort expended for educational reform will have only limited benefits—particularly for poor minority children—as long as the underlying . . . social issues remain unaddressed.”<sup>2</sup>

This document sets out to travel from the high moral ground of “Campaign” to a more practical landscape of clear policy statements to aid Federation officers, leaders and activists in determining CFT’s legislative positions and Convention resolutions and to inform the community at large of the Federation’s policies.

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<sup>1</sup> James Comer, Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry, serves as director of the School Development Program at Yale University’s Child Study Center and as associate dean of the Yale University School of Medicine

<sup>2</sup> “Educating Poor Minority Children,” *Scientific American*, p 42 Vol 259, #5, November 1988

## **I. CONTEXT FOR EDUCATION**

Education does not take place in a vacuum but in the world. Changes in that world, whether political, social, economic or philosophical, affect students and education workers, making their tasks more difficult as they struggle to adjust the educational process to external forces. Attention to socio-economic issues makes it possible to address educational issues more clearly.

**Poverty and Employment.** CFT has always recognized the direct linkage between the economic welfare of the family, the community and the public schools. Therefore, CFT supports

- a progressive system of taxation at all levels of government.
- tax code revision providing a return to higher percentages of total taxes paid by corporations and the wealthy.
- a significant increase in annual federal and state tax allowances to families for their children.
- programs that provide job opportunities for all Americans.
- a continued reduction in our "Cold War" industrial-military base and a comprehensive transfer of defense budget funds to peaceful, job-producing uses.
- quality education and support services for homeless children.
- reprioritizing funding from incarceration to education.

**Political/Democratic Reform.** CFT supports the evolution of a political system that moves away from star candidates and meaningless platforms toward commitment to real issues and accountability.

Therefore, CFT supports

- strong political parties with accountability for candidates and elected officials.
- public funding and regulation of election campaigns, as well as reform in voter registration laws.
- an enforceable code of candidate conduct and ethics.

**World Affairs.** Events in the world affect education workers and students very directly. The CFT must put its moral weight on the side of

democracy, freedom and social responsibility. Therefore, CFT supports

- working directly and within the AFT and the AFL-CIO to develop solidarity and support for democratically-run unions throughout the world that work to improve the conditions of workers and to further the cause of social justice and civil liberties.
- working to renew labor's historical commitment to international free democratic unionism, social justice and individual civil liberties.

**Labor Law.** The CFT is committed to labor law reform to strengthen the union movement and the protections of democratic collective bargaining. Therefore, CFT supports

- legal restrictions on employers' ability to fire striking employees and/or permanently replace them.
- the right of workers, public and private, to organize unions for the purpose of collective bargaining.
- union recognition based on 50% of unit signatures.
- striking workers and workers' right to strike.

**The Environment.** CFT acknowledges the importance of protecting the environment as a matter of responsibility to our children's future.

Therefore CFT supports

- environmental education so that protection of the environment will become an indelible part of good citizenship.
- protecting and strengthening environmental laws and policies.

**Housing.** CFT recognizes that inadequate or unaffordable housing leads directly to conditions which contribute to a violent and hostile environment for education and children. Therefore CFT calls for

- a state and national coalition of government, banks, builders, realtors and unions to work in coordination to formulate and execute a national policy to build adequate and affordable housing for all Americans.
- practical policies leading to eradication of homelessness.



**Health Care.** CFT has historically supported a single-payer health care system to replace the current inadequate and unworkable system. CFT has also historically called for solid health education. Therefore CFT supports

- low-cost, high-quality, single-payer medical care for all Americans.
- comprehensive health care programs in schools that would include regular medical, dental and vision check-ups for all students.
- a publicly-funded and administered system of compulsory inoculations.
- the institution of effective education programs that will provide students with the information necessary to make rational health choices.
- adequate funding for medical research promoting greater understanding of and treatments for cures for diseases such as AIDS, HIV and breast cancer.
- extension of health care benefits to domestic partners.

**Equity.** Evident prejudice against ethnic and religious minorities, as well as against sexual orientation and persons with disabilities, continues to affect our schools adversely. Recently the state has seen a disturbing increase in acts of intolerance, hate and violence. The passage of Proposition 187 in 1994 reflects the rising tide of xenophobia. Therefore CFT supports

- the fundamental principle of the *Brown v. Topeka* decision of 1954, which reversed the “separate but equal” doctrine.
- affirmative action in hiring.
- the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- implementation of proven alternative experimental educational efforts for at-risk students within the public school setting.
- thorough training in awareness of sexual harassment in the workplace.
- elimination of sexual discrimination.

- enactment of laws which ban discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, sexual orientation, disabilities, class, religion or national origin.
- educational program to end discrimination and provide safe learning and work environments.

**Safety and Violence.** Our schools unfortunately mirror society's high tolerance for and spiraling incidents of violence. Some of the causes of this violence reflect the presence of drugs in schools and society, a presence which has resisted various costly and ineffectual efforts to eradicate them. CFT calls for ways to address these issues outside the scope of the criminal justice system. Therefore CFT supports

- "zero-tolerance" of drugs and weapons on campuses.
- a drug prevention strategy (including alcohol and tobacco) based on education, medical treatment and effective governmental regulations.
- education and training for education workers in dealing with incidents of disruption, violence and harassment.
- programs and intervention systems addressing conflict resolution and the causes of violence.
- a progressive policy of alternative placements for disruptive, disorderly students at all grade levels.
- clear discipline codes with fair and consistently enforced consequences for misbehavior.

## **II. SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION**

No document on education policies can ignore the central fact of chronic under-funding that has plagued California schools since the passage in 1978 of Proposition 13. Even Proposition 98's (passed in 1988) guarantees of 40% of the state's budget to education have not helped alleviate the effects of this under-funding. Until California's citizens come forward in full support of their schools, education workers will struggle to provide effective education programs with inadequate resources.

**Funding.** Statistics about California's low place on every list of educational funding abound: last in national pupil-teacher ratio in public elementary and secondary schools, 45th in dollars for public schools per \$1,000 of personal income, 38th in per pupil expenditure (California Department of Education Fact Book 1994-95). Without adequate resources, California's system of education and the education workers employed by it cannot provide the services each student deserves.

Therefore CFT supports

- maintaining Proposition 98 funds as a minimum for K-12 and community college funding including full COLA and statutory growth in each fiscal year.
- as an intermediate goal, bringing funding for California schools up to the national average.
- continuation and expansion of current funding for programs such as Title I, Goals 2000, bilingual education and other federal initiatives in support of public education.
- a full program of student grants at the federal level. (The current reliance on loans has caused an impoverishment of college graduates and a reluctance to enter relatively low-paying public service careers.)
- direct loans to students where appropriate.
- adequate funding for California's system of community colleges and public universities and elimination of student fees.
- exclusion of private companies from the management of public schools.
- federal funding under the control of education rather than Employment Development Department

**Revenue Authority.** Schools, continuing education, community colleges and the universities are not keeping pace with the need for new construction and continuing maintenance of facilities. Therefore CFT supports

- majority vote rather than two-thirds vote on local taxes to support schools and community colleges.

- statewide bonds for school, community college and university capital construction projects.

**Technology.** Every student must have access to updated technology to support academic and vocational achievement. Therefore CFT supports

- adequate funding for hardware, software, training in and maintenance of technology.
- appropriate partnerships with the private sector in order to increase access to technology.
- free, local access to Internet and other on-line services for teachers, education workers and students.

**School Environment.** Learners and employees cannot function or learn in unsafe or inappropriate environments. Too many schools and colleges in California lack adequate seismic safety features, need asbestos work and have deferred maintenance projects. Therefore CFT supports

- building energy-efficient schools which accommodate the need for small groups.
- maintenance of existing buildings.
- passage of bonds for repair and maintenance of educational facilities.
- building schools which reflect the latest research for school design and construction.
- provision of health-promoting equipment for all education workers.
- inclusion of contract language in local agreements supporting ergonomic computer equipment and other furniture.
- employer-provided inservice training on the correct ways to use ergonomic equipment.
- strong, fully-funded, enforced Cal-OSHA standards.

### **III. CONTENT OF EDUCATION**

Polling shows that some of the erosion of support for public education stems from the perception that schools concentrate on frills or irrelevant

social proficiencies rather than on basic academic skills. Students must acquire appropriate competencies as they move from grade to grade and be able to demonstrate acquired knowledge through a range of assessments.

**Curriculum & Instruction.** What is taught and how it is taught lie at the heart of the educational experience. Therefore CFT supports

- teachers as primary agents of curriculum development, including participation in state bodies addressing curriculum issues, such as Instructional Resources Evaluation Panels (IREP's) and Curriculum Commissions.
- close partnerships between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education to refine curriculum using current research findings.
- California's curriculum frameworks and content/performance standards.
- performance-based assessment of students as opposed to multiple-choice assessments.
- local programs which prepare students to be active learners.
- high school diplomas which mean having the knowledge and skills essential for college or a rewarding job.

**Labor Education.** CFT believes that students must learn about labor in our society today as well as the history of labor's contributions to society. Therefore CFT supports

- creating and integrating lessons across the curriculum on the role of labor in society.
- inservice workshops for teachers and support staff on how to teach about the labor movement.
- integrating labor history into the school curriculum and state frameworks for all levels.

**Standards.** Positive change for education cannot take place without the setting of clear and challenging standards for students. Therefore CFT supports

- high, rigorous, world-class standards for all students incorporating appropriate student accountability measures.
- high grades standing for high achievement.
- earned promotion.
- the acquisition of revenues and resources necessary to bring reality to the imperative that "all children can learn."
- full participation by education workers in the establishment of standards for students.
- on-going curriculum revision to meet emerging standards and changing student needs.
- allotting time during the regular work day to all education workers to facilitate implementation of high standards.

**Special Education.** CFT believes in every child's right to an education that can maximize his or her potential. Therefore CFT supports

- the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- appropriate placement for every student, whatever his/her disabilities with adequate and appropriate support staff.
- "full inclusion" only when essential supports for the "included" student are in place.
- adequate preparation and professional development for teachers of students with disabilities.
- protection of staff from performance of procedures most appropriate to trained medical personnel.
- full funding of special education by direct state payment for mandated programs.

**Bilingual Education.** CFT has long been committed to bilingual education because of our belief that every child has a right to an education. Therefore CFT supports

- bilingual education programs to foster normal development in students' skills and knowledge in their primary language while they learn English, thus lowering the drop-out rate for English learners.
- opportunities for every child to acquire fluency in English and

facility with all its component skills in order to have access to the core curriculum.

- quality programs that foster pride in students' origins and culture.
- development of multilingual skills for all students.
- appropriate professional development, designed collaboratively with teachers, provided by employers for teachers who work with English learners.
- the rights of education workers to remain free of duties appropriate to immigration agents.
- teacher involvement in selection of English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Development (ELD), and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) instructional materials and input into local ESL budgeting.
- assessment in each student's native language when appropriate.
- the use of native language paraprofessionals as appropriate.

**Instructional Materials.** Effective education requires sufficient materials and equipment. Therefore CFT supports

- local discretion over spending on materials.
- well-equipped schools that have the instructional materials needed to carry out a rigorous academic program.
- the availability of materials in native languages for English learners.
- teacher involvement in the selection of materials at district and site levels.
- teacher involvement from all levels on the Instructional Resources Evaluation Panels to evaluate materials using framework-based criteria and to make recommendations to the Curriculum Commission.
- mechanisms whereby teachers get tax credits and/or reimbursements for classroom materials they purchase with their own money.
- increased funding of the Instructional Materials Fund.

**Libraries in Schools.** The resources contained in a university or college campus library attract scholars and students, thus enriching the life of the institution. Interestingly, K-12 students' reading scores declined in direct relation to declines in funding for school libraries. School libraries must keep pace with developments in disciplines as well as the appropriate technology for utilizing these developments.

Therefore CFT supports

- adequate funding for libraries.
- continuation of the tax check-off for library support.
- adequate staffing, including support staff and fully prepared librarians in K-12 libraries, as well as professional development for all library staff.
- professional status for librarians.

**Distance Learning.** While the concept of distance learning has received a great deal of support as the higher education community deals with delivery of educational services to students, it has enormous implications for education workers. Therefore CFT supports

- monitoring of distance learning for educational integrity.
- retention of faculty academic responsibility and control over instruction provided by the various modes of distance education.
- traditional selection and evaluation of faculty, who teach distance education courses using the consultative process including the faculty and the department.
- inclusion of contract language to insure protection of staffing allocations and class sizes from incursions by distance learning.
- preservation of the student-teacher relationship by structuring distance education courses to include substantial faculty-student and student-student interchange.
- limiting the number of credits that may be awarded for distance education.
- undertaking distance education courses only when a campus-based alternative is impractical.



**Intellectual Property Rights.** Technology promises to bring education to those who could not otherwise benefit from it. However, the advantages of technology carry with them potential weakening of teachers' control over their own work. Therefore CFT supports

- protection of ideas, lectures, presentations and materials developed by teachers from exploitation by employers and management.
- recognition and clarification of teachers' ownership of their own work.

**School-to-Career.** One of the goals of education is to equip students for careers. Therefore CFT supports

- partnerships between business and education leaders in implementing School-to-Work in California.
- programs which contain high performance standards and that reflect the integrity of both school and work.
- efforts to prepare students to function as fully participating citizens.
- laws and regulations that aim to keep students in school, rather than encourage them to leave early.
- programs that encourage heterogeneous groupings rather than new ways to track students.
- recognition by business of students' educational accomplishments by requiring diplomas and/or a clear standard of academic achievement as a condition of employment.

#### **IV. STRUCTURES IN EDUCATION**

Ideally, education operates as a continuum from an individual's earliest years throughout his/her life. For the sake of convenience and clarity, however, policy must address separately the different ways in which we organize education, while never losing sight of the whole system. As all segments of the system are interdependent, any change in one affects the other.

**Higher Education.** The state's system of public and private higher education is vulnerable to the same pressures besetting other parts of the education community. Therefore CFT supports

- strengthening of the Higher Education Employer-Employees Relations Act.
- controlling and reducing the unwarranted growth of administration at all levels.
- no contracting out of services within higher education.
- programs of affirmative action in all educational institutions.
- recognition of and protection for the professional status of librarians.
- security of employment for non-tenure faculty, including lecturers at UC and all part-time faculty.
- decreased reliance on part-time faculty and the enforcement of the 75/25 full-time/part-time regulations of the community college Board of Governors.
- enforcement of the community college 50% law requiring districts to apply a minimum of 50% of their revenue to classroom education.
- paid office hours for part-time instructors.
- democratizing the selection process of the UC Board of Regents.
- reform of the UC promotion and tenure system.
- full funding of higher education in order to ensure free access for all qualified students.
- faculty control of curriculum, including courses taught through distance education.

**Charter Schools.** CFT believes that K-12 districts and other entities can accomplish their desired reform goals within existing regulations and waivers. Therefore CFT supports

- working with policy makers to discourage change for its own sake.
- requiring formative as well as summative evaluations of charter

schools, as well as careful periodic evaluation of the enabling legislation.

- keeping a reasonable cap on the number of charter schools permitted.
- requiring collective bargaining provisions in such schools' charters.
- requiring the ethnic balance of the larger social context in newly established schools.
- strong opposition to subversion of public schools into mini-private schools or any laws that permit the establishment of private schools under enabling charter school legislation.
- teachers' efforts to establish charter schools within the public schools.
- emphasis on improving student achievement in all charter schools.

**Partnerships: K-12 and Higher Education.** Improvements in student achievement depend on coordination between the levels of education. Therefore CFT supports

- establishing K-16 partnerships between colleges and universities and elementary/secondary school systems.
- bringing public school employees and college faculty together to develop excellence in curricula and standards for students.
- partnerships between school practitioners and teacher educators to strengthen teacher preparation and provide valuable professional development.
- encouraging visits between higher education faculty and K-12 schools for the purpose of articulation.

**Partnerships: School, Parents and Community.** CFT recognizes the need for parent involvement in the education of their children but, for a variety of reasons, that many students' parents become detached from their children's schooling. Therefore CFT supports

- efforts to continue to open school programs to parents.

- inclusion of parent-involvement techniques in teacher preparation programs.
- membership and participation of educational personnel in local parent-teacher organization.
- encouraging parents to enter into partnerships with schools, know school calendars and procedures and work within those partnerships to develop a school and community culture.

**Coordinated Services.** Schools can make efficient use of available resources through coordinated delivery of social services for students and their families. Therefore CFT supports

- using schools and/or county offices of education as centers of service delivery for students and their families.
- team approaches to delivery of such services.
- sharing of information so that educational personnel can best serve students.
- programs which provide specifically trained personnel to oversee coordination of services.

**Restructuring.** Schools must respond to local needs by adjusting the way they deliver instruction and other services. therefore CFT supports

- restructuring efforts that involve teachers and school staff and serve the educational needs of students.
- protection of collective bargaining agreements in restructuring schools so that new policies do not conflict with existing contracts without union agreement.
- mandated line of decision-making so that the "restructuring committee" doesn't replace the bargaining agent.
- union participation in the restructuring process.
- assessments built into restructuring plans.
- reform and restructuring efforts to accomplish the goal of small learning communities for students.

**Adult and Continuing Education.** Adult education programs meet important educational needs in the community not addressed by other programs. Therefore CFT supports

- retaining and supporting effective programs where they are, whether in K-12 districts or in community college districts.
- equitable funding—geared to community needs and without artificially imposed caps—of adult education programs as fundamental and integral parts of the education system.
- broad consultation with employee groups and the public for any changes in the status or organization of adult education programs.
- expansion of adult and continuing education resources in order to strengthen programs and prepare adults for the 21st century.
- staffing of adult and continuing education programs by a greater percentage of permanent tenured faculty.
- reciprocal acceptance of qualifications for teachers who teach comparable classes in either K-12 adult education or community college non-credit programs.
- recognition of career adult educators whose salaries and working conditions should equal the working conditions experienced by their K-12 and community college colleagues.
- state funding for continuing education facilities for community colleges and K-12 programs.

**Early Childhood Education.** While research shows the importance of early experiences to later educational progress, early childhood educational programs suffer from the misperception that personnel need no particular skills for working with young children. Therefore CFT supports

- on-going staff development requirements for early childhood educators in all child development programs.
- public relations activities and professional development programs to recognize the value and importance of early childhood educators and to address their professional needs.
- recognition of and respect for the vital role parents share in the development and education of young children.
- the principles inherent in the development of the whole child, including but not limited to positive self-image; development of

cognitive, language, motor, sensory, tactile and social skills; and health and nutrition education.

## **V. PROFESSIONAL CONDITIONS IN EDUCATION**

For decades, education workers have struggled to balance their needs as employees with their needs as professionals. Continuing to work toward professionalization, education workers have seen erosions to education through cuts in funding, loss of prestige and increases in the day-to-day difficulties of their jobs. Throughout these years of struggle, employees in schools, universities, colleges and children's centers have clarified the notion of what makes for a professional environment.

**Workload.** Too often those outside the classroom see teachers as "working" only when interacting directly with students. Too often the teachers' workday does not allow for the professional activities, such as collaboration, more and more recognized as leading to improved instructional effectiveness. Therefore CFT supports

- restructuring of the work day to recognize the needs for collaboration and collegiality.
- educating policy-makers so that they understand that educators perform a range of duties in addition to working with students.
- educating policy-makers so that they understand that educators perform a range of duties in addition to working with students.
- employer-supported released time for professional activities.
- lower class size.
- paid office hours for all employees to allow students access to their instructors.

**Due Process.** CFT believes all education workers have the right to due process in all aspects of their professional lives.

- due process rights to probationary teachers.
- retaining due process in employment rights for all teachers and education workers.

**Teacher Recruitment, Preparation and Credentialing.** All children deserve educational experiences designed by well-prepared

teachers who know their subject matter and how to teach it and can handle pedagogical and subject matter challenges. Therefore CFT supports

- retention of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing as an autonomous licensing agency.
- high standards for teacher preparation programs as well as high standards for credentialing, acknowledging the difference between academic preparation and ability to teach.
- a continuum of recruitment, preparation, induction, support and development to attract and retain a diverse cadres of strong and effective educators.
- stricter sanctions on administration and employers which flout personnel laws.
- raising entry-level salaries to encourage recruitment.

**Academic Freedom.** Restricting academic freedom for professional educators has an inevitable chilling effect on their performance in the classroom and workplace. Therefore CFT supports

- Full academic freedom for teachers limited only by the First Amendment.
- strong probationary rights so that individual new to the profession receive useful evaluations giving reasons for dismissal when necessary.

**Educational Support Staff.** Classified staff's key role in providing effective education must be reflected in budget development. Therefore CFT supports

- developing and utilizing the skills of paraprofessionals and other school related staff through K-14.
- provision of fully-funded training for paraprofessional and school-related personnel (PSRP) to move through a career ladder as educators.
- fair and equitable salary schedule that reflects and is commensurate with the importance and value of their occupation.

- no contracting out of services.
- mandating and funding along with maintaining and increasing support services in the schools and community colleges.

**Evaluation.** Evaluation of education workers exists to improve the quality of education and delivery of services at all levels. Therefore CFT supports

- adoption of a wide range of evaluation methods using the best current practices.
- using the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' methods as models for K-12 evaluation.
- incorporating in local practice methods whereby National Board-certified teachers' skills may be recognized and rewarded.
- peer evaluation as part of K-12 evaluation practices.

**Professional Development.** Teaching involves lifelong learning. However, effective educators require continuing education from sources other than employer-provided "staff development" programs. Therefore CFT supports

- life-long learning for all educational employees.
- adoption of a true professional development model in which teachers and education workers create communities of learners for on-going professional growth.
- empowering teachers with sufficient time and support to take over their own and colleagues' professional development.
- working toward a closer fit and greater communication between research and practice.
- employer-provided retraining for those whose assignments have or will be changed.
- employer-supported continuing education for all education workers so they may keep current in their fields.
- educating policy-makers to the value of professional development.



**Salary.** While educators have never been well paid, education workers' salaries have suffered through the chronic under-funding that has plagued California's schools. Some groups, such as part-timers, paraprofessionals, child development workers and adult educators, have remained at exploitative levels when sufficient funds became available. Employers cannot recruit and retain well-prepared workers if salaries remain low. Therefore CFT supports

- salary schedules for teachers and education workers that reflect levels of preparation.
- fair and equitable salary schedules and benefits for all categories of employees.
- paid office hours for all employees to allow students access to their instructors.

**Retirement.** The education system deserves well-remunerated professional who may retire with dignity. Therefore CFT supports

- improvement in teachers' and education workers' salaries commensurate with the importance and value of their occupation.
- legislation to allow improved retirement income.
- inclusion of a classified member on the PERS board.
- finding ways to improve retirement benefits for teachers so they don't have to leave the classroom in order to retire with adequate income.

**Collective Bargaining.** The ability to bargain collectively allows education workers to unite for improvement of their professional lives. Therefore CFT supports

- collective bargaining efforts that protect and increase the rights of employees and promote better communications and relations between employers and employees.
- and encourages those bargaining methods which improve the working conditions of employees.
- "interest-based" bargaining approaches that result in reducing unnecessary hostility between the employer and the employees.

**Contracting Out.** Private companies with no experience running schools have a poor record of improving student achievement. No clear evidence exists to show that the work of schools, colleges and children's centers improves under these companies' management. Therefore CFT supports

- careful examination of solutions to public education's problems by the local stakeholders.
- retention of public monies for the use of public institutions.
- no privatization or contracting out of services for public education.

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# The California Federation of Teachers

## FACT SHEET

American Federation of Teachers/AFL-CIO

### CFT OFFICERS

**President**  
Mary Bergan  
**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Michael Nye

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**Community College Council**  
Marty Hitzman  
**Council of Classified Employees**  
Terry Eversum  
**Early Childhood K-12 Council**  
Jocid Fox Ruby  
**University Council**  
Dick Vorch

### What is the California Federation of Teachers?

■ The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) is the statewide organization of local unions of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Every AFT local in California is affiliated with the AFT, the CFT, and the AFL-CIO.

■ The CFT represents nearly 90,000 educational employees working at every level of the education system in California, from Head Start to the University of California.

■ The CFT's governance structure divides the federation into four councils corresponding to the major divisions of education employees: Early Childhood/K-12, Community College, University, and Classified.

■ The American Federation of Teachers, led by long-time president, Albert Shanker, boasts a national membership of more than 900,000 members.

### Why is there a CFT?

■ Founded in 1919 to provide a labor union alternative to the California Teachers Association, which was then dominated by school administrators, the CFT spoke for classroom teachers during a long period when California's teachers worked in near-feudal conditions. CFT lawyers and courageous teachers tested the courts again and again, building a body of case law to protect activities of teachers taken for granted by other workers. One observer said, "The AFT in California is responsible for having won 90 percent of the cases dealing with teachers' rights during the 1960s."

■ The CFT introduced the first teachers' collective bargaining bill into the California legislature in 1953, and reintroduced similar bills for the following two decades, until passage of the Educational Employment Relations Act in 1975 finally brought collective bargaining rights

to school employees. Since then the CFT has continued to represent teachers and other school employees in professional and employment matters.

■ The CFT has led the movement in California for school reform based on high standards for both teachers and students. Together with the California School Boards Association, the CFT initiated the "trust agreement" program in a number of school districts in California. Trust agreements provide for joint work between teachers and administrators on educational issues, developing ways of cooperating both inside and outside of the collective bargaining contract.

■ The CFT regularly holds union-sponsored professional conferences called QuEST (Quality Educational Standards in Teaching). These conferences explore innovative ways to improve teacher effectiveness and student learning. The CFT is the unquestioned leader in the state in school reform and restructuring.

### Who are the CFT's officers and staff?

■ Mary Bergan was elected CFT's president in 1991. Prior to her presidency, Bergan served as CFT Legislative Director for many years, consistently named by her peers as one of the most effective lobbyists in Sacramento. Bergan also serves as a vice-president of both the AFT and the California AFL-CIO. Before her full-time work with the CFT, Bergan taught junior high school English.

■ Michael Nye serves as CFT's Secretary-Treasurer. Nye is a former CFT Vice-President and past president of the San Jose Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 957. Nye is also the former business manager of the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County, AFL-CIO. He currently serves as president of the Western Region Jewish Labor Committee.

#### CFT VICE-PRESIDENTS

Marty Hittelman, Jr. VP  
Los Angeles  
Mary Allen Callahan  
Morgan Hill  
Marilyn Sue Chapman  
Susanville  
Mike Cherry  
Los Angeles  
James Dyer  
Pawley  
Greg Eddy  
Gilroy  
Peggy Smith  
San Francisco  
Mild Goral  
Los Angeles  
Janet Hoffman  
Salinas  
Day Higashi  
Los Angeles  
Michael Hubert  
San Francisco  
James Johnson  
Corbin  
Beverly Mantle  
Lawndale  
Loon Marshall  
Los Angeles  
Shirley Meier  
San Diego  
Yvonne Owens  
Los Angeles  
Phyllis Pipes  
Costa Mesa  
Barry Ravel  
Petaluma  
Jaqueline Rivers  
San Mateo  
Jacki Fox Ruby  
Berkeley  
Joan-Marie Shelley  
San Francisco  
Octavio Silvestre  
Ventura  
Mike Wolmer  
Santa Paula  
Dorothy Williams  
Los Angeles

#### AFT VICE-PRESIDENTS

Mary Bergen  
Oakland  
Joan-Marie Shelley  
San Francisco

■ Marty Hittelman serves as CFT's Senior Vice-President and Community College Council President. Hittelman, a mathematics teacher, formerly led the faculty union of the Los Angeles Community College District, AFT College Guild, Local 1521. Hittelman has served on many legislative task forces and is a past member of the statewide Community College Academic Senate Executive Committee.

■ Terry Elverum, a graphic designer at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo, presides over CFT's Council of Classified Employees, the school support staff, non-certificated members of the CFT. Elverum is also president of his local union, the Cuesta College Classified United Employees, AFT Local 4606.

■ Jacki Fox Ruby heads CFT's Early Childhood/K-12 Council, and her local union, the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1078. Ruby, an educator of 31 years, taught elementary and junior high school classes.

■ Dick Vortich, a librarian in the Bio-Agricultural Library at UC Riverside, leads the CFT's University Council, which represents the librarian and lecturer bargaining units in the University of California system.

■ Joan-Marie Shelley is California's other AFT Vice-President. She presides over the United Educators of San Francisco, AFT Local 61, and is a CFT Vice-President.

■ Judy Michaels serves as CFT's Legislative Director. Michaels is a former community college instructor and librarian and CFT Vice-President. She presided over her community college local union, and sat on the the Orange County Board of Education.

■ Dolores Sanchez is CFT's Legislative Representative. Prior to her work with the CFT, Sanchez served as a consultant to the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and the Senate Office of Research. Sanchez was formerly a bilingual instructional aide in Los Angeles.

#### How does the CFT work?

■ The highest political body of the CFT is its annual convention. At the convention, hundreds of delegates democratically elected in locals throughout the state come to debate and decide issues facing the organization.

■ Every other year the convention elects the

CFT president, 24 vice-presidents, and the secretary-treasurer. Between conventions, the State Council, to which all CFT locals may send delegates and which meets twice a year, and the Executive Council, comprising the officers of the CFT, make decisions for the organization.

■ The four governance councils meet quarterly to share information relative to their constituencies and to formulate policy proposals for the State Council, Executive Council, and convention.

■ The CFT Committee on Political Education (COPE) reviews political candidates and their positions on issues, and participates in the campaigns of endorsed candidates.

#### Where can the CFT be found?

■ CFT officers, field representatives, and staff work out of offices located in Oakland, Burbank, Sacramento, Gilroy, Ventura, Hawaiian Gardens, and Petaluma. The Sacramento office houses the CFT's legislative and lobbying operations.

■ The CFT can be found in the more than 100 bargaining agent locals all over the state, from Lassen County in the north to San Diego in the south. Many locals also employ their own staff.

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#### For more information

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